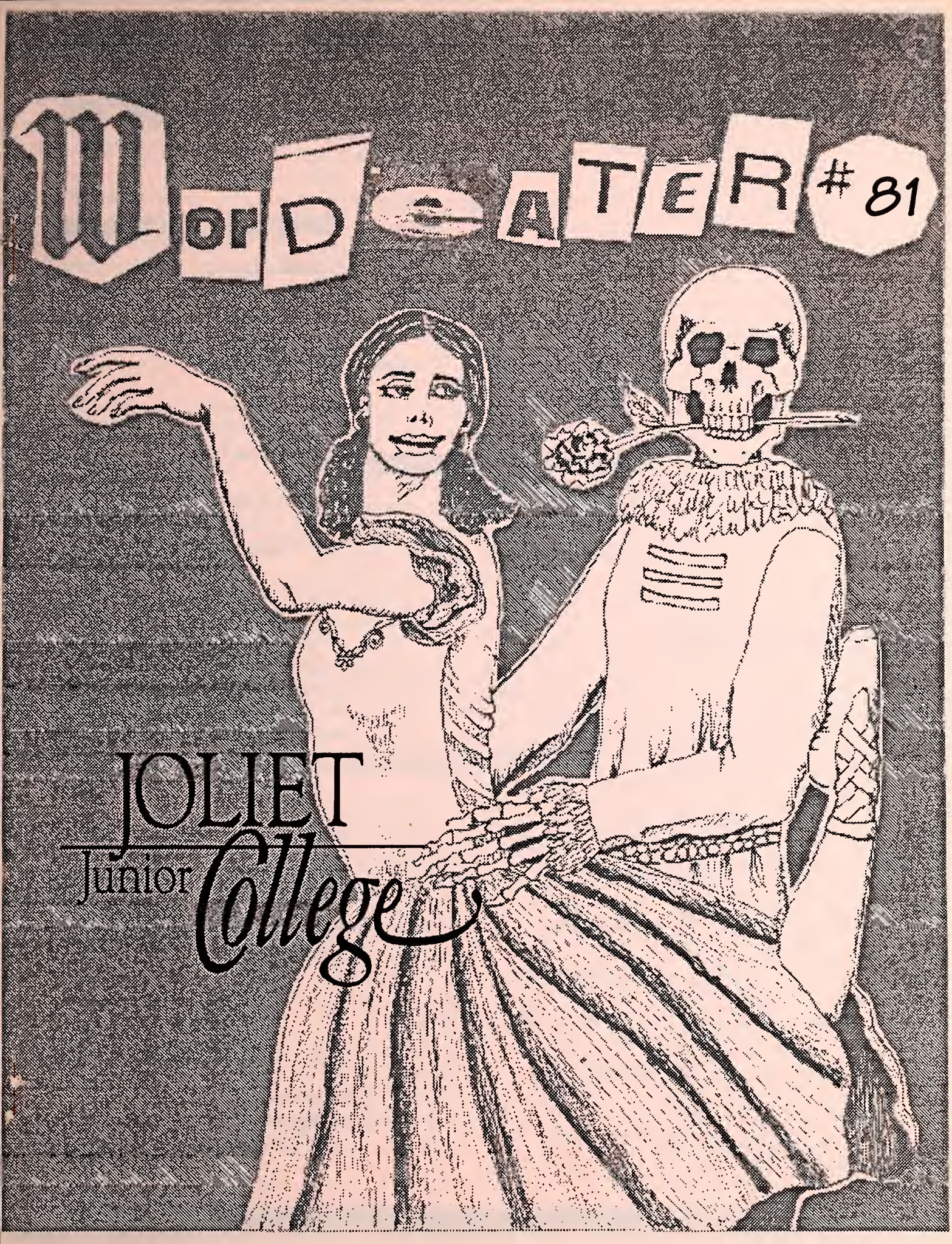
Word Theater #81



JOLIET Junior College

Wordeater

JOLIET Junior College

Wordeater '81

December, 1992

The ***Wordeater,*** student literary magazine of Joliet Junior College, is published six times a year by Illinois Community College District 525, Joliet Junior College, Office of Student Services and Activities, 1216 Houbolt Avenue, Joliet, IL 60436-9352,1-815-729-9020 ext. 2308, FAX 1-815-744-5507. Mr. Donald M. Bell, Director.

The views expressed are those of the individual student authors and do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions or policies of the Board of Trustees of Illinois Community College District 525, Joliet Junior College.

All printed materials and copy rights are retained by the authors whose permission must be given prior to reprinting.

Awards

Poetry - $5.00 each

Christian Bernal

Lynn Klemkeksel

James Maxwell

Laurie Montgomery

Sheryl Mostalesch

Kevin Olchawa

Donica Rampa

Bree Sayers

Ryan Seeley

Jonathan Wolff

Cover Design - $20.00

Shellie Smith

Wordeater '81 Staff

Christian Bernal

Nancy Crow

Jennifer Jay

Sharon Lawson

Mary Frances Lund

Tony McFadden

Joy Tomaszewski

John Stobart, *Advisor and Editor*

All works accepted for publication in this edition of the ***Wordeater*** were approved by at least four members of the staff. John Stobart was solely responsible for deciding the award winners.

Submission Deadlines

Manuscripts and cover designs must be submitted to:

Mr. John Stobart
C-1069
Joliet Junior College

by February 15, 1993 for ***Wordeater '83*** and by April 15, 1993 for ***Wordeater '84.***

#1 - I Saw a Poem Today.

I saw a poem today.
It was written on the side of a tree
In snow-covered branches opening
to the sky.
It was nothing fancy
Just black and white
But a dappling more perfect than any
artist could draw
Or brush could paint
Perfect shading, perfect lighting
And all from where the snowflakes
fell.

I saw a song today.
It was sung by the babble of a brook
Running beneath the frosted trees.
It was nothing fancy
Just snow and ice
But a ripple more perfect than any
voice could sing
Or piano could play
Perfect melody, perfect harmony
And all from where the snowflakes
fell.

Lynn Klemkeksel

#2 - Images

We are on the opposite page
(a discarded moment, sleeves rolled and tattooed, a paper plate of cookies, glass broken and glued, reaching and staring upon someone else, a hand from the ceiling, an eye from the shelf)
desperately hanging off the margin.

Bree Sayers

#3 - AHHHH

Once upon a time these was nothing
in a reflection.
For a brief moment, beauty did not
exist.
Everything had an equally wonderful story to tell,
Opaque film need not flow over any
eyes.
The light can be warm with feeling.

Tony McFadden

#4 - Think of Puddles

Drop softly, sounds of rain
Believe what you hear when it
echoes in your mind
Small thoughts are big ideas in the
clouds
Brought down to the thinkers
Washing away confusion and dust
Leaving a smooth open plain
A wandering paradise
Wet with wonder, flowing to the out
ward
Bringing into the pool of thought,
another world.

Tony McFadden

#5 - Bonfire

Silent and dumb
lying before me
she is on the bed
her and her detachable parts

Smiling and perfect
sitting around me
they are on the floor
them and their painted eyes

Ignited and burning
blazing behind me
Barbie's in the fire
her and her plastic friends

Bree Sayers

#6 - To Appreciate a Fire

To appreciate a fire
You have to be chilled to the bone.
To appreciate desire
You have to have been all alone.
To understand your heart
You must listen to your head.
To tear your world apart
Go look for love, my friend.

Lynn Klemkeksel

#7 - Sunset on the Lake

Explosion of color
Enormous red ball
Wisps of clouds making bizarre
patterns
Slowly fading away . . .

Diane Drick

#8 - Black Bird

As I was walking out one day
I met a bird of pray, of prey?
It happened to me long ago
That baffling, boasting bird of clay

And as I walked he talked and talked
I dared not doubt his motives now
Forsooth, he was a man of cloth
And I, a trusting soul as yet

Convinced I was of Holy Debt
I owed to heaven a cross to bear
But not to beastly bird of prey,
of pray?
That doubling, troubling man of clay

And as I walked on one fine day
His smile it leered, he almost jeered
The devilish truth of him appeared
That blackish man of prey

So as you walk be now aware
The collar though it look so white
may be a mighty bit too tight
to hide the fatty neck of clay
of cold black birds of prey (of prey!)

Laura Maxwell

Contents

#1 - I Saw a Poem Today. 2
#2 - Images 2
#3 - AHHHH 2
#4 - Think of Puddles 2
#5 - Bonfire 2
#6 - To Appreciate a Fire 2
#7 - Sunset on the Lake 2
#8 - Black Bird 2
#9 - Eternally Free 3
#10 - Leaders 3
#11 - Tribute 3
#12 - A Place for Us 3
#13 - Why Did You Die? 3
#14 - I Dropped and Soared 4
#15 - Old Garden 4
#16 - She Turns Her Head 4
#17 - Underneath the Packaging 4
#18 - Down in Front 5
#19 - Jericho Dreams 5
#20 - Colonial Woods 5
#21 - Vanishing 5
#22 - Confection Corruption 5
#23 - Godlike 5
#24 - Rituals of the Ego Dancers 5
#25 - Freely Floating Through the Fronds 6
#26 - Prelude 6
#27 - Saw-Blades Chitter 6
#28 - He's Not the Keeping Kind 6
#29 - Survive 6
#30 - Wicked Smile 7
#31 - State of Mind 7
#32 - The Buzz 7
#33 - Flower 7
#34 - Hallmark 7
#35 - Second Chance 7
#36 - The System of Ones and Zeros 8
#37 - Writing Crimp 8
#38 - Peering Intently 8
#39 - Strive 8
#40 - I Did Get Off 8
#41 - Drenched 9
#42 - After the Wedding 9
#43 - Stepping Outside of Myself 9
#44 - Send to Me 9
#45 - Party On 10
#46 - Embrion 10
#47 - America, the Proud 11
#48 - Loreli 11
#49 - Induction to Cancer 11
#50 - Daddy's Way Led to Denial 12
#51 - Sunstretch Gone 12
#52 - Traveling Warrior 12
#53 - Feeder Mouse 12
#54 - The Philosophy of Numbers 12
#55 - Special 13
#56 - Seduction 13
#57 - She Sleeps 13
#58 - Practitioners of Lust 14
#59 - Sleak Sounds 14
#60 - Oh My Dear 14
#61 - For Man 14
#62 - Now 14
#63 - Two Rides for the Price of One 15
#64 - Paradox 16
#65 - The Plantation 16
#66 - Mental Breakdown #9 16
#67 - A Rake and Ladder 16
#68 - Good Love 16
#69 - Cough Syrup 17
#70 - Hitting Home 17
#71 - Identification, Please 17
#72 - Christopher Columbus 17
#73 - Einstein of Emotion 17
#74 - Down Time 18
#75 - Chicago Stairwell 18
#76 - Population One 18
#77 - There Would Be No Disease 19
#78 - All Alone 19
#79 - Mundane Murder 19
#80 - Just for You 19
#81 - Isolated 19
#82 - I Want Something 20
#83 - Bright Desert Sand 20
#84 - Need Help Quick 20
#85 - Back to School 20
#86 - Rebecca Thompson Brown (1992) 20
#87 - We'll Miss You Torrey 21
#88 - Letting Go 21

#9 - Eternally Free

Motorcycle red flying down the road,
no caution, no cares, passing right
by me,
through traffic, uphill, a dangerous
mode,
A man and a woman eternally free,
Monotonously I drive my car,
The night wind brushing their faces
and hair,
I feel desire to stop at a bar,
The sounds of lives run my emotions
bare,

An obscure stormy night is on the
prowl,
Fiery, destroyed steel I see ahead,
The victims mangled flesh, I hear
them howl,
Imagining the scene I know the couple
is dead,
Ambulance lights flashing and I
can't think,
I sit on my stool and consume
my drink.

Laura Montgomery

#10 - Leaders

Plastic people
with plastic lives.
Interchangeable morals
with interchangeable minds.

Foolishly watching the end of
the world.
Undaunted, untouched
they change the channel.

Bree Sayers

#11 - Tribute

To you who live in a pulsing heart of concrete
Who have never felt the poetry of a rippling stream
Never sensed the majesty of a soaring mountain
Never heard the symphony of autumn leaves

to you who go from box to box
Never sleeping under shelter of the sky
Never counting the stars by name
Never falling asleep to the music of pines

To you who nest in eyries of steel
Who never will hear the cry of the wolf
Never will feel the oceans' strength
Never will know all the parts that make a whole

How can you destroy what you have not seen?
How can you erase what you do not feel?
How can you make ruin when you do not know
What you are causing to be lost
Forever?

Lynn Klemkeksel

#12 - A Place for Us

journey with me
to the edge of darkness
where the sun doesn't shine
and nightmares are
a welcome relief
when we close our eyes
to the cruelties we witness
in our hopeless lives.
i come here often, alone.
but it's something i want
to share with you...
a place we can call
our
own.

Janine Passehl

#13 - Why Did You Die?

Why did you die,
and leave me alone?
Who will I call on the telephone?
I can't cope
with the way I feel.
The pain I have,
is oh so real.
I hurt so bad,
I just want to cry.
Why did you leave me?
Why did you die?

Heidi Terry

#14 - I Dropped and Soared

I flew, feet leaving the ground
Speeding wind crashing my chest
My wings spread wide, slick with rain
Drips of rain bulleting by like fiberglass lights

A light behind me pushes me down
As I try to lift it up
To pull me to Him
But this God is cruel

My head slices through air
Rhythmically pumping faster
Tightening muscles in my jaw

God watches me fall and he stays
I fall, beginning my crash
My head is spinning fast
My eyes streamed with tears

And God watches my fall

Ryan Seeley

#15 - Old Garden

Stately gladiolus spiking toward the light
Variegated greenly climber of roses
Teasing their neighbors with wafting scent
Velvety touch of petunias circling the path
Orange yellow marigolds determined to startle
purpling pansies caught playing in the dirt
thin raspy cutting edge of a dusky weed
surreptitiously intruding in a drama of color
Even the lichened stones have taken root
And no one dare presume to move them

Laura Maxwell

#16 - She Turns Her Head

She turns her head in the moonlight
Her eyes like sapphires in its gleam
She tosses her head
Sending waves of hair cascading down
in lush brown ripples that fall into place
Her dress rustles of silk
Its warm peach hue lighting up her skin
She moves with a dancer's grace
As the wind ruffles her hair
She waits with an expectant look
Her face one that has captured the heart
Of every prince at the palace
Her smile one that they all hope to see
Light up her face like the sun
But for now she stands in the garden alone
Turning her head as if hearing someone call
Feeling the whisper of her dress, the rustle of her hair
Then her glance is caught and held like a deer's
She freezes as she meets my eyes in the mirror
Then blinks
And vanishes like a dream.

Lynn Klemkeksel

#17 - Underneath the Packaging

You came just like a package in the mail
Wrapped up tightly with plain brown tape
I wanted to let you just sit on the counter
But curiosity led me to slit the tape,
Fold back the flaps,
And try to figure out what's inside
And underneath the cardboard
Was darkness, and at first not much more
Until I caught a glimpse of something white
And under the styrofoam pellets
I thought that I had figured you out
But I turned my interest away.
But curiosity took hold of me
In the form of scrunched-up newspaper
Protecting what lay deeper inside
So I peeled back another layer
And found more of the same
A swirl of dark and light
Bound together by music
But not the heart of the package
So I checked the address
And found it had somebody else's name on it
But curiosity will not let me return this parcel
And so I keep searching
Hoping to find what's really in there
Looking for the pearl of your heart
Underneath all the packaging.

Lynn Klemkeksel

#18 - Down in Front

A funny little man stands at the front of the room
Unable to see the minds around him.
He laughs at jokes only he can understand, as I ponder his notions,
then laugh even though I have no clue.
What I se can't be described in words, but in my mind expressions flow.
Although the funny little man stands alone,
he gives me a funny little feeling that puts a smile on my face.

Steve Maielli

#19 - Jericho Dreams

Sometimes Jericho dreams of being
a Savior unto all people.
And then She thinks of how she has
been scorned
by them all and decides
to destroy them instead.

Jericho dreams of being a Hero.
But then He looks back upon his life
and sees that nothing good
will ever becomeof Him.

Jericho dreamsof getting married
and becoming a Father
But then He thinks of how others
recoil from Him
andrealizes that He could never make
anyone happy.

Jericho dreams of going to college
and making Her family proud.
But then She sees how she must fail
no matter what She does
and decides to spare them
theshame.

Jericho dreams of finding someone
who understands and
accepts Her for what She is.
Then He thinks of how He didn't fit
even with His peers
and decides not to even try.

They dream of ending it all,
Cast out the outcast.

Joshua Dipert

#20 - Colonial Woods

Colonial woods
of birch and pine
full and fertile
with extended glory

primitive paths
pervade the promiscuous
forests flourishing
foliage
and cross smooth streams
of woodland tears

how lonely
how relaxed
we sweep in the
swinging breeze

Christian Bernal

#21 - Vanishing

Vanishing into the moonlight
Bouncing back and forth between
clouds
Playing ping-pong with my thoughts
Wishing never to end
Or to leave you behind

Laura Offrink

#22 - Confection Corruption

Your soul
Singer ~~Sugar~~ coated with innocence
Dipped in purity
And wrapped in security
which I unwrap and dissolve
and corrupt within my mouth
for we'll both enjoy every morsel.

Jeff Hicks

#23 - Godlike

The human glow
was there
in the masses
of gorgon trees

stable figures
standing in the wind
godlike

Christian Bernal

#24 - Rituals of the Ego Dancers

Circles of
False pretensions
Self inflated
ascensions
Bouncing and
blabbering—
Protecting
frail emotions
Little pig
mentality
Paranoid
lock-out

Jonathan Wolff

#25 - Freely Floating Through the Fronds

Freely floating through the fronds
Over the Pond
His tips light upon the water
Sending ripples,
Circles of motion
Eddies on your current life

To shape the rest of your life
Your hollow, soulless body and
        brainless head
Reel and pitch and empty of thought

A single thought crosses your
        confused thoughts
"Run."
And you do.

Years later,
Looking over your shoulder
You see that you were wrong

Ryan Seeley

#26 - Prelude

Violins ablaze.
Bow to electric queens.
With contemporary gleams.
Let the locks fly,
Aggression sweat,
And beauty die.
Raise your hands
(cold)
Amongst the bouncing radicals.
Bleed through greed
That salts our wounds.
Cry a survival plea
Of Anarchy.

David Tieman

#27 - Saw-Blades Chitter

Saw-blades chitter,
        greedily
Shredding the pulpy
        flesh
Of an angel
        ripped free
        from its
        dark hovel.
An electric
        shriek
In the distance.

This must be
        the cornerstone
Of wilted souls
Raped in their
        homeland
During its
        prime.
Chaotic crowds
        watch
        and laugh
From the observation
        platform.
White bulbs
        of fascination

Let us gawk—
        there is blood.
A peek at
        another's demise.
A fascination
        with death
Like eager
        Christmas children.
        Did you see his
        intestines on
        the interstate—
Crushed worms
        in wine.

Jonathan Wolff

#28 - He's Not the Keeping Kind

I know what love is, little girl,
That's why I set him free—
Not because he loves you best
And wants no more of me.

You cannot capture wind
And hold it for you own
A free spirit will wander
Until it's found a home.

Don't hang on
He'll never stay
You'll only ground his flight
Then one day, you'll turn away
He'll be off into the night

A stubborn mule
Is a stupid fool
You're going to take the fall
Trust me child, I know him well
He's not the keeping kind.

Donica Rampa

#29 - Survive

Sometimes we argue,
Sometimes we don't.
But we have to remember what we
        have is special.
When we argue,
It is not a question
of your pride
or mine.
It is a question of how strong our
        love is,
and if we
have the will
to survive.

Tina Szegedi

#30 - Wicked Smile

Through the frail veil of
        Queen Ann's lace
she meticulously
weaved herself
her unstained eyes catch a slow
        sun's dance
passionate winds
comb her hair
shave her mind

she knows of the flowers
and of the earth
rain from her new hat
has unspeakable worth

and the meadows cannot hold
        her joy

hold her kiss as it
butterflys away

Christian Bernal

#31 - State of Mind

Wind echoing through my soul
somber night passing the time
Chaotic unity
Of my mind, floating on
The edge of reality
Abandoned by being to
the prism of the unknown
Behold the tranquility
Zone

Laurie Montgomery

#32 - The Buzz

Grey unstable room
Motioning about my head
Too much alcohol

Laurie Montgomery

#33 - Flower

My poor flower
Picked too soon
Please forgive me
As my needle drives through
My poor flower
Cold as death
Close your eyes
As I steal your breath

Christopher Savini

#34 - Hallmark

Living in this little fantasy of you
I thought of your leaving
the thought...
        It scared me
without you I'd die
I can't explain
the emptiness I'd have
because you'd take away
all your care
leaving only my used carcass.

After all of this
I got to know you
and it all seems
a little cliched—
melodramatic and hankneyed—
because I'm saying...
Good-bye.

Kevin Olchawa

#35 - Second Chance

The first time we hugged,
        I never let go,
Eternal Embrace.
The first time I saw you,
        my eyes never closed,
Beginning of a vision.
The first time you whispered my
        name was the last scream that
        filled my ears.
Mystical touches.
Beautiful sight.
Lingering tones of musical love,
The last time you loved me
Was the first time I died.

Tony McFadden

#36 - The System of Ones and Zeros

The powers that be,
Created the system of ones and zeros
That dictate our actions.
Why two simple numbers
Contain authority
Is beyond logical reasoning.

Who could have thought,
That the system of ones and zeros
Would control our every move?
We cannot even write
Without the authority
That dictates our new thought.

We can't go far,
Without the system of ones and zeros
Telling us when to stop and start.
Letting us know,
When our individuality
Has run out of gas.

Thanks to them,
The accursed system of ones
and zeros,
Has all power over our lives.
Enabling money men
To have full control
Over our independence.

Even as I write,
The damned system of ones
and zeros
Is evolving into six to the third power.
Fortunately for all,
It will be returned to the sand,
From where it came.

Jim Goebel

#37 - Writing Crimp

Thoughts keep mingling in my mind
morning, noon, mostly night
but I soon forget them if
I don't sit down to write.
Then I wonder whether
They're written well enough
for another's sight.
And if I could fact
Up to the disgrace
Of such a plight.
Rip, scribble, erase.

Sheryl Mostalesh

#38 - Peering Intently

A man freaks
and shrieks
As he watches
his severed arm
Writhe convulsively
in the dirt.
"It was an
accident,
I didn't mean
to do it.
I didn't think
she would get pregnant.
I didn't know
I would give rise
To this new
nation
Solemnly swathed
in your
patriotic blood."

Blind swine,
you have fucked up
for the final time.
You are doomed
to adore whores
and thieves.

Jonathan Wolff

#39 - Strive

Nothing lasts forever, and through
the times I have to climb
above the rest of you.
I have to rise.

Stephen Maielli

#40 - I Did Get Off

I did get off
on the horror
on the life
on the death
in all the disrespectful reality

They all
hid
behind hands
worming sights
through their
little fingers
like ashamed

sane

humans

I often think
as at the second
before birth/death

I'll orgasm

Christian Bernal

#41 - Drenched

Skin feels so wet. Gave up trying to regret.
Eyes are filling up again.
Visions are thicker in pairs of ten,
or maybe eleven. Our faces are cut to
even imperfection.
Do you remember how you came this
far?
At the stoplight you never think of
where you are. He keeps laughing all the time,
instead of hanging in the door try putting your
head back in your mind. The tape is always stuck
in rewind. See how regret never forgets.
Can't be too sure by reasoning with yourself.
Who is really? Nobody's pure. Ever notice how it
doesn't matter when you're at the stoplight?
Standing on the corner. This time it seems that
I'm bored most of the time. Walked down to the lake
shore today. Tripping over bodies I once knew. Some faces
familiar but only a few. At parties there's nothing to do
I'll just wait and get invited too. It's still a few, and
then some. Well I'll be a son of a gun.
Yes, I know I can't be right tonight. Father was an
acquaintance who probably was my dad, but don't cry over that
I never said I was sad. But if you are, then I'll surely be
glad. Cause I never cared until I got to the stoplight. Then
it all hit me at once. I could, but I couldn't forget who I
was. Just sitting at the stoplight.

Adam Wilcox

#42 - After the Wedding

Her childhood room is empty now
like the feeling in my heart.
She has her own abode to fill
with memories to part.
The time has seem to come so soon
now that she is away.
Like any break
it can never be the same.
Just as the child who was
once part of me
must venture on her own
I know this and yet
why did I feel so alone?

I guess I'll call her on the phone.

Sheryl Mostalesh

#43 - Stepping Outside of Myself

Stepping outside of myself
for a minute
I lose myself in the air around me
And I feel the cool brush beside me
I see the lingering fingers
that tell me what I have done
I only ask if it was worth it
To remember my life as it was
Or as it—
A painful, surly fight
And a conflict of rage
Stepping outside
I see what I am
And hope to be what I was

Ryan Seeley

#44 - Send to Me

Send to me
The cloak of darkness
This sunlight burns my eyes
The brightness was a masquerade
A costume for the lies

Laughter danced before me
A brazen teasing tart
And taunted me to chase her
As she tore my word apart

No I've no need for vision
Nor smiles and happiness
Rather leave me to the shadows
Within my cloak of darkness

Donica Rampa

#45 - Party On

Ritzy sat in the big chair at the party, drinking some Maui rum concoction the soused host had made for her. She watched the anonymous bodies stream in and out of the rooms and house. And she wondered what the hell she was doing here at 3:00 AM. She could be at home in bed, but no.

Bobby Brown pounded out of the speakers, and tough dancing was an idea that fluttered briefly through her mind, she was content to pet the beast of a black Chow that sat at her feet. The Beast uttered a low growl as Ritzy's friend stepped close.

"That Freakin' dog - I swear to God -"

"Maybe it's your perfume, Dee," she suggested.

"Oh, crock and bull, the damn thing is jealous. She thinks I'm going to take her beloved master away. Can you believe it?"

"Metallica sucks!" someone shouted in the background, but nobody paid attention. Ritzy quirked her eyebrows and turned back to Dee

"Maybe you should go out with Chris."

"Ah, I don't know. don't think I want a boyfriend whose dog is apt to maul me. Look at that thing. Get it away."

From the kitchen a chorus of male voices chanted, "Go!, Go!, Go!, Go!, Go!"

"Oh, there goes that testosterone thing again, "Dee remarked. Ritzy grinned and took another swig.

"Metallica Sucks!"

"Shut Up!!!" everyone replied in unison.

"Is the reason you won't go out with anyone because you still hope Cal is going to wake up?"

"Oh screw Cal, He's got his brains in his Gluteus Maximus half the time. No, Maybe, I don't know. Hey you want something to drink?"

"Nah, I better get going. Hey, is everything okay? I mean, you seem to avoid c-a-l as a conversation topic a lot lately." Dee took a long drink of beer and replied, "It still stings, is all, you sure you don't want another Maui?" "Yea, yea, I gotta get going."

"Metal...!" the voice was mysteriously muffled before it was able to finish its phrase.

Ritzy gave the Chow a parting pat and stood up, "Dee, I gotta cruise, see you Monday?"

"Yea, okay, take it easy, thanks for coming."

"You gonna be at Matt's bash next week?"

"Yep, probably," Rita stepped out the door and sighed. There goes another night in the fast lane.

#46 - Embrion

Clear streaming music rolls in
the meadow
bloody sands dominate the sunset
twist in the lively dusk
open the dome
to space

calls in imposter movements
flower the moon light leaches
give call to ghouls and the
juracic church
there is fury in the hills

knowledge is passed in
ghost whispers
the trees know all
see
all
everything

it's coming up...now
come back in a different window

the earth is seductive
vast and erudite
the planets are incestuous siblings
whose children have ran away

giant compound eyes capture the
entire rapture
murderous trust adorns sick smiles

Christian Bernal

#47 - America, the Proud

"I'll have a Big Mac...
extra special sauce...
Umm...large fry...
ahhh...nine piece McNugget...
...and...a hot fudge sundae-
no nuts! Okay!?
...hmmm...
and a large diet coke,"
said the obscenely obese woman.
An obnoxiously long haired-
Tye-dyed teen and his
half-shaved, half-purple haired
black Converse-wearing friend
turned toward her and laughed.
I sit and watch...
eating a small, green salad,
wondering
"What is wrong with America?"
when,
the answer is right in front of me.

Kevin Olchawa

#48 - Loreli

The light hue of your hair,
Accurately enhances the
radiant pools
That are your eyes.

Your diminutive stature enables
The ability to look upward
At the circumstances that surround.

Your smile alone is a treasure
That is made of greater riches
Than all of the gold in the
Black Hills,
And all of the diamonds
from Arkansas.

Your conversations are always
friendly and caring;
You speak great dreams
and concerns
With a taste of light corrosiveness,
But you can be flattered
yet flustered
If told certain emotions.

Lori, I write this for you,
Never forgetting of my feelings for
you,
And the distance that prohibits
them.

Jim Goebel

#49 - Induction to Cancer

The soft sensual cigar smoke
is a queer high
gently lofting its way upward
like a fallen angel with
dark radiance
and falling like a harsh purr on this
winter tile

with a cherishing touch
a kiss
it blows away
alien anatomy swirls
in the inncandecent hum
a bed of smoke
roses smile
in the utopian message

not a creature is stirring
and the cupboards are hair

nothing can save us
from a feline stare

Christian Bernal

#50 - Daddy's Way Led to Denial

Daddy's way led to denial
Mommy's led to loneliness
All others lead to confusion
I don't want to be "That Way"
So I have to go my way
I wish life had road signs
keep right, merge, dead end
So I could know for certain
Daddy says—follow him
he pays his bills—he is fine
—But he lives life with blinders—
Mommy says follow her
—But there are drawbacks to
no compromises—
And the others I know?
the others are
Tired, depressed, discontent
and cynical
They have death wishes and
drug problems
I don't want to be that way—
Guess I'm not a follower.

Donica Rampa

#51 - Sunstretch Gone

Sunstretch gone,
Loss of blind
innocence reveals past
Catcalls
faint and
echoing
Under fleeting
orange haze.
Child games stretch
into the evening
Shunted only by
bells
and parental
bellows.
Five more please
become thirty,
Premature
manipulation.
Arise early dawn
and repeat
the cycle
Frightening further
Paranoid Parents.

Jonathan Wolff

#52 - Traveling Warrior

From the dawn of time we came created by a God who showed no mercy, forced to travel silently down through the centuries living by a death sentence; not knowing what is worse, life or extinction. Living many secret lives; passing through mortal peoples souls; struggling to reach the time of the gathering. The ultimate prize for these persecuted immortals. For the few who remain, the lost souls of an unforging God, will battle to the last. No one has ever known they were among us. Until now.....

Charles O'Conor

#53 - Feeder Mouse

You lived in a motherhood,
The building was soft and warm,
A cushioned cedar floor,
a brother and sister.
What brought you to this destiny?
Certainly love didn't drive
you away.
I apologize to your outcome.
And thank you for what you're not
meant to be.
Accept this ode, and bid goodbye,
For stranger, hang your head
and die,
Not a fitting end for such
Go quickly after final touch.

Tony McFadden

#54 - The Philosophy of Numbers

One is king, two and beyond are free but entombed in the primacy of the first. All things revert to a singular cause. Two speaks of one in contempt for if not for the first's existence it solely would reign over Three and its children. Ten becomes the anniversary of one and one-hundred of ten, until the absurdity can only become rational with the election of one as giver of life to all. So, one sees all but lingering behind it, railed only by the incapacity of One for hindsight, is the nothingness of zero.

Frank Sanchez

#55 - Special

Deep
in my shrewd
crowded
confines
of glassy air
misty pandemonium
compels me to compose

For what
for that
something...

talented weavers
have spun
like mighty spiders
colossal monuments
which have all

fallen
something...

like the wind
devours
the earth
greatness
is consumed
by time
searching
endlessly
searching

for that
that
something

The flowing lion
can only
stare into the sun
so long
before he is
shot
and he can never
reach the sun before darkness

I shall reach
the sun
and behold it
in all it's timid brilliance
and I shall reach
farther

Christian Bernal

#56 - Seduction

He turns to me
And tilts his head
In silent contemplation
Then slowly stalks to make
his kill—
His newest love relation—
The lights have dimmed
The candles lit
The music soft love-rhythmic
I am watching waiting wanting
like a hopeless, drug-crazed addict.
"Its getting late and I should go."
His eyes lock me to a stare
Seductively, his tongue
Sears my throat
And I am trapped in his lair.
Closer now, and closer still
Pressed hard against my mouth
His hands are moving east and west
While mine are heading south
On the floor in candlelight
His hair a golden mane
Once again I attempt to escape
Before I go insane
His husky voice says I'm free to go
As his body moves above me
His eyes smirk, saying "I don't
think so"
I'm in his cage and he shall
have me.

Donica Rampa

#57 - She Sleeps

She sleeps
in pink
sweet satin
slumber
sprawled like a
cute kitten
on the great mattre[illegible]

The halls are
hollow railroads
breathing hues
of clicks and footsteps
weariness

I watch her sleep
still

foot hanging off
like a worn child
carried up the stairs
and to the bedroom
sleeping

and she wakes
smiles
and I come

Christian Bernal

#58 - Practitioners of Lust

Money
controls
the arousal
of materialism

need
want
buy-buy-buy

materialism
contains
the lust
for power

compete
climb
control

Power assures
the organism
of greed

Kevin Olchawa

#59 - Sleak Sounds

Sleak sounds
in shaded areas
nests nestled
in the tranquil trees

Bestial barks
whispered wonderment
like giant ribbons
weave
flutter
and mince

quickly
like passing spirits
in and out
timid and persistent

The green hills
are lagoons
of kind flowery flesh
on steamy evenings

Christian Bernal

#60 - Oh My Dear

Oh my dear, while you sleep,
I lay my dead down and I weep,
Thinking of the times we've had
Thinking of the good and bad.
And then I remember a place
so far,
This place is where your
troubles are,
And I wish you would, just for
one day,
Just come to me and get away.
But you see, my dear, while
you sleep,
I lay my dead down and I weep,
Because I think of my love for you,
And I wonder if you love me too.

Tina Szegedi

#61 - For Man

We spray our hair
Layer lashes
Line lids
Cover our lips
Trim our hips
Enhance our breasts
Try to look our best
We bare our bodies
But
Does he ever see
the real
me?

Sheryl Mostalesh

#62 - Now

What now
again
a constant question
he wakes to

why now
again
a persistent pondering
which haunts him

how...
now
for the first time
the quiescent quandary
with an ever
elusive answer

Not now
again
his indolent delay
live for today
it's the way
he say
thinking of tomorrow
can only bring
sorrow

Christian Bernal

#63 - Two Rides for the Price of One

The downpour of rain gradually was putting the all night driver into a state of hypnosis as she followed the yellow lines down the highway. In the distance, she noticed someone furiously waiving their hands over their head. as she was slowing down, she was thinking, "Am I going to stop to help? Am I going to give them a lift somewhere? Or am I going to continue driving down this ghost town-like highway?" She wasn't sure what she was going to do. All of a sudden, she found herself pulled over and saying, "Do you need a ride somewhere?" "Thank you, you're a lifesaver" he replied. She unlocked the door and let him in. It wasn't until around five miles down the road that she thought she ought to say something, since he had said nothing. "My name is Stacei, What's yours?" "Scott" he answered. She continued, "Don't feel uncomfortable, I know just how you feel, I used to ride with strangers, too, when I was going to college. You can relax." "Thank you", he said. "So, what do you do, Stacei?" "I'm an artist." "Do you work for someone, or what? he asked. "No," she replied, "I freelance. I have a display opening up on Monday."

As the rain started to dwindle down, Stacei started to fall asleep at the wheel. Scott cried out, "Look out for the rail!" "Oh my God! Oh shit! I can't believe I did that! she screamed. "Do you want me to drive?" he offered. "No", she replied, "there's a motel a mile or two up this road. Once we get there we are only about sis hours away from the city. Oh, by the way, where are you going, anyway?" "To the city" he said in a sullen voice. The change in his voice made Stacei begin to think, "How convenient. I don't have to go out of my way and I won't feel guilty leaving him in the middle of nowhere."

After pulling into the motel parking lot, Stacei got out of the car and was walking towards the motel office when she turned and asked "Aren't you coming in?" No" he answered. She pressed, "Well why not?" "All I have for money right now is an uncashed check. I'll just sleep in the car" he said in a frail innocent voice. "Well, OK" she replied hesitantly.

About an hour or so passed and Stacei couldn't fall asleep. "Fine thing" she thought, "earlier I almost crashed the car because I couldn't stay awake!" She kept thinking about Scott sleeping in the car. It was driving her nuts, so she got out of bed and went tot he door. Much to her surprise, Scott was standing there when she opened it. He looked as if he had been standing there for a while. "Do you have an extra blanket and a pillow" he asked, "It's getting a little cold out there." For a second, Stacei thinks that she shouldn't let him in. "This guy is a stranger, I don't know who he is, what he does, or where he comes from." But she asks him in anyway saying, "you can sleep in here on the floor" she tells him as she hands him a blanket and a pillow. As he places the pillow and lies down with the blanket, Stacei returns to her bed feeling more relieved and at ease with her conscience. Suddenly, she has a feeling that Scott is staring at her and it makes her nervous. Trying not to let her nervousness show, she asks, "Is there anything else you need?" "Yes," he says "Could you hand me some matches? I'd like to have a cigarette before I go to sleep." "Sure, there should be some right here on the nightstand," she answers. Grasping the matchbook, she realized she would have to get out of bed to give Scott the matches. Swinging her legs over the edge of the bed, she stood. He never said a word, just lay there looking up at her. She looked down at him laying there and suddenly thought that she wanted to have sex with him...passionate, no holds barred sex! Her good judgment was telling her no, but her libido was having nothing to do with that answer. Her hormones were running wild and something deep inside of her was urging her to make the first move...NOW! She said nothing as she handed him the matches, but stared erotically into his eyes. As Scott takes the matches, Stacei furtively reaches for the buttons of his pants. Taking her cue, he slips off her shirt as their lips meet in a passionate wet kiss. It is obvious that neither of them is interested in much foreplay and Stacei is pleasantly surprised when she discovers that Scott is very well endowed. Pushing his shoulders back, she says, "Relax and enjoy the ride."

As a shard of sunlight stabbed through a rip in the cheap motel curtains, Scott's eyes fluttered open. Stretching his arm across the pillow, he realized she wasn't there on the floor where they had both fallen asleep after their frenzied orgy. He called here name, thinking she might be in the bathroom, but there was no answer. Raising, he crossed to the window and pulled the curtain back. The car was gone. Well, that's one on me. Usually, it's the other way around. Walking over to the shower, he thought, "Oh well, it could be worse, she could have used up all of the hot water."

Amy Guertin

#64 - Paradox

Questions?
Comments?
Execution.
Meager
        final reflections.
Spectators
        gleefully observing
Rapt,
        staccato shots.
Bloodshed
Final
        remittal bow
Body-slump
Escape
Freedom

Jonathan Wolff

We sat on the roof
at a place
called

the plantation

looking down
the people looked up
we gave them

a salutation

lying back
looking skyward
I felt like a star
lost in

a constellation

Kevin Olchawa

#66 - Mental Breakdown #9

The psychological atrocities
that are dancing through
my mind—all mental
functions put on hold,
(how I love the style!)
Black and white both
fade to grey
Bordering on the edge
of mental breakdown #9
coming down the line

Sue Cherven

#67 - A Rake and Ladder

To my childhood
I leave:
One mountain of crunchy leaves,
One frisbee ont he rooftop,
One parent that blew away,
And another that I couldn't reach

David Tieman

#68 - Good Love

There is hanging from a hook
        on the east end of my room,
        a man, but not any man,

This in one good lookingindividual
        who has taught us more about love
        than anyone who has lived.

And what can be more good-looking
        than the crimson breach
        in each of his outstretched hands.

Jim Goebel

#69 - Cough Syrup

Walking slowly across what used to be tall grass
prairies, it's hard to picture barren miles of rock
and sand as expanses of green.
The few weeds and shrubs are scattered, adding
a loneliness of lost souls to the wanderers
absent companions.
When was land beautiful?
What happened to the Nature to be one with?
Dead land, floating through the heavens, carrying
this thoughtful passenger in a circle into time
that will only run out and forget its past and
Re-live the new life brought to an old friend.
Oh, to experience the birth of what now only
fossils are made of. To watch cleansing waters
flow again, and create a breeze that would
Bring breathe for the choking earth.

Tony McFadden

#70 - Hitting Home

"I will work for food"
the sign read

If it were the city
I would have thought
how sad, that's too bad

The difference here
was that this man
was on my street
in my town

I wanted to stop
ask him what happened
why he was so low

I only looked out my window
then in my rear view mirror
as I passed him by

Kevin Olchawa

#71 - Identification, Please

Upon entrance into my lair
please present a photo I.D.
And let me know who really lives
in you

My father can leave,
my brother can turn away
And my sister must close her eyes
if she stays

My mother knows
but please keep your distance
The sun shouldn't burn you,
my dear

Please don't call yourself a friend
a husband
a lawyer
a lover
nor a priest
Because I'll have to let you leave

Ryan Seeley

#72 - Christopher Columbus

An inmate of this culture
I watch with burning eyes
A heroic legend from the past
Fall to his demise
Finally.

Bree Sayers

#73 - Einstein of Emotion

I did some crying
I did some praying
And I did a lot of thinking
The thinking led to revelations
Which led to theories
All relative to the reasons of
"Why the boy ran away"
Until I realized that
All theories could be right
—or wrong—
And it all ends up in the
Same place anyway
Him being with her
And
Me being alone
What a waste of wind

Donica Rampa

#74 - Down Time

We Sliced through the water,
the harsh head wind hurt
my hands—
I bent over and fought
the waves and rain
that spit in my eyes
The weather started to break—
I squinted to find
our little cove
finally
we hit a calm
the sun squeaked out
A bird broke into song—
A deer looked up from the brush—
A beaver swam to its dam
We slowed into the bay—
From the weeds jumped a bass—
I threw in my line,
and sat for a time

Kevin Olchawa

#75 - Chicago Stairwell

Chicago stairwell
ethnic tiles mosaic the floor
late night tunnels to safety
home

souls searching for the
wicked angel
between the refineries
and restaurants
beach side breeze
lost and lingering
in cowardly huddles
in crooked alleys
souring

italian latino blacks
conjugate
in the city glows
all night
long

Christian Bernal

#76 - Population One

The sunrise edged above the horizon,
above the long straight two lane highway
separated by the blurring dash-dash-dash
of yellow line.
A green sign rushed closer
against the growing day—
golden corn engulfed the road
as the sign came into full view.
It simply read,
"Your life 13 miles"
The cornfield streaked into rolling hills
and scattered shacks—
as the shacks tore by they changed
into a small town with a local tavern
and corner drugstore.
Cruising down main street
the town evolved into suburbia
with rows and rows of precisely decorated homes
screaming with complacency and conservatism.
The day clouded and drizzled
as the highway extended to four lanes—
suburbia became less affluent and the homes
became large brick buildings with the
scars of smoldering fires around
the bare broken windows.
Lightning enveloped the sky—
hail played a fevered beat on the windshield
Fighting, the noon sun dried up the clouds
and the clean rays flashed off the windows
and the sleek steel skyscrapers that loomed above—
Passing through the city I tried to slow,
but the force of the traffic thrust me along
until the Metropolis led to a narrower road—
with the plush green golf courses of another
yet more beautiful suburb
which seemed to...linger...a bit longer
on the highway. Unfortunately, the sun started to set.
As dusk wore on—
the landscape flattened into swaying fields
of long dry grass.
Seemingly, out of nowhere—
the bright lights of a large semi
lit up the road from behind
glaring into my rear-view mirror—
blinding my sight—
until—
I could no longer see.

Kevin Olchawa

#77 - There Would Be No Disease

There would be no disease if
society weren't addicted
to sickness.

Christian Bernal

#78 - All Alone

In the benevolent silence of night, the anguish that lies seemingly dormant during the light hours, my troubled mind is awakened. It is awakened by the pain that comes from the beating of a broken heart.

Broken not from sickness or age, but by he unbridled rage of love that has been shattered; by ignorance and the unjust turmoil that is life.

Love, as life gives no justification for its heinous acts of humanity, only that for which it takes.

It makes me lust for vengeance; vengeancefor that which it has taken from my heart, my mind, my soul. I just want to be free.

Sheryl Mostalesh

#79 - Mundane Murder

Mundane Murder
average
artistry
of kindly
slaughters
corpulent, ghostly
breasts
arresting the seance
mesmerism
of wise
unfed ushers

Fluent chimeras
tease and
mete torture
upon gyved mannequins
nightly
in this
hot
dissolving domicile

Lengths without measure
the mirage
militia
of life
rapidly ravaging
the high churches

Christian Bernal

#80 - Just for You

I gave her a single rose.
Delicate to the touch.
Vibrant red with long green stem.
Just to show how much I love her.

Steve Maielli

#81 - Isolated

Isolated
motionless
orchid
sleeping
in the
empty
field

wakes to meet the
bee

as he drinks
of her
provocative
pollen

she sings for
the butter
and
the dragon

alluring them with primal scents

she plays all day before the
peeping tom
sun
teasing and taunting
oh, everyone

winking at walkers
and passerbys

she flirts and flirts
until the
moon
is high

pretty little
prostitute
striped by the air

free
glowing
angel
with fire for hair

Christian Bernal

#82 - I Want Something

I want something
I can keep
perched high on the shelf
To be taken down
in the still late night
under the bed
to be read.
Printed on
the finest flesh—
Painted letters of reason
describing a call to treason.

I want something
I can see
tangibly timed
obsidian soul
Tossed head dismissal
ridicule
laughter
erection fingertips
Societal paradox
Assassinations of
sinful hope

Did you know they've
found the beginning
of the Universe
at its end?
(or maybe it's
the beginning)
They've found God
through golden lenses
Gravitational Jesus
Hydrogen High-Priest
stoned on helium
and stardust.

Jonathan Wolff

#83 - Bright Desert Sand

Bright desert sand mingles calmly
in galactic swirls
perfect lively butterflies.

Christian Bernal

#84 - Need Help Quick

Smith Corona
Replacement Parts

Dear Sir,

We have recently moved and during the move the cord and plug from my practically new Smith Corona De Ville typewriter were lost. Would you please send me a cord and plug and also please advise me on how to repair a damaged relationship that's had innumerable jolts and is somewhat frayed at the edges? We would very much like to save both, if possible.

Thanking you in Advance,
Sincerely,
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Laura Maxwell

#85 - Back to School

Dead man stalking
eyes of Jupiter stream
graveyard solicitor
he takes locus position in the
vast classroom

garbed in the uniform of birth
knowledge is absorbed in
an estranged
nocturnal osmosis
the pupil sways in thick excess

Christian Bernal

#86 - Rebecca Thompson Brown (1992)

She jumped from the cliff
She'd never been free
The memory that haunted
Would not let her be

The men that had tortured
Her sister Amy
Were asking for pardon
And bargaining a plea

The call came too late
the answer was no
With death was her date
She just had to go

Sheryl Mostalesh

#87 - We'll Miss You Torrey

As I drove by the banner facing Houbolt, tears blurred my vision. How sad to die so young. Torrey had just started the new semester at JUCO. My daughter's boyfriend's name was included in the list of friend's signature scribbled on the waving memorial.

I didn't even know Torrey, but I sympathized with his mother, as a mother. I thought of her thrill and fear of discovering that she was pregnant with that child, the long nine month's waiting period, and the unbearable pain of childbirth. The many nights of sleeplessness, hours of feeding, changing, and consoling. The fear for his falling when he took those first tumbles and then on. The sadness of losing her baby to kindergarten and then the sentimentality and joy mixed in watching him turn into a young man. The hopes for his future. The lectures and warnings about being careful. The arguments about getting a motorcycle. The many, "oh mom's", she must have heard. The fear fulfilled. The love for fast in the boy quickly took him away.

So, my six-year old son, please try to understand when I ask you to slow down on your bike now, and later, in your car. Don't roll your eyes when I warn and caution about dangers. somehow, I know I'll listen to the "oh mom's" too. You already have that fascination with speed. The fear hangs on.

Childbirth labor was very painful, but in time its memory is dulled. The pain of losing a child could not be compared, and I'd never forget, and I don't want to know it. We all send our children off to the war of life and hope that they keep marching home again. We cross our fingers and hold our hearts as if that will protect us.

When I pass that particular place on Houbolt I'll think of Torrey. And to Torrey's mother, I send my sympathy.

Sheryl Mastalesh

#88 - Letting Go

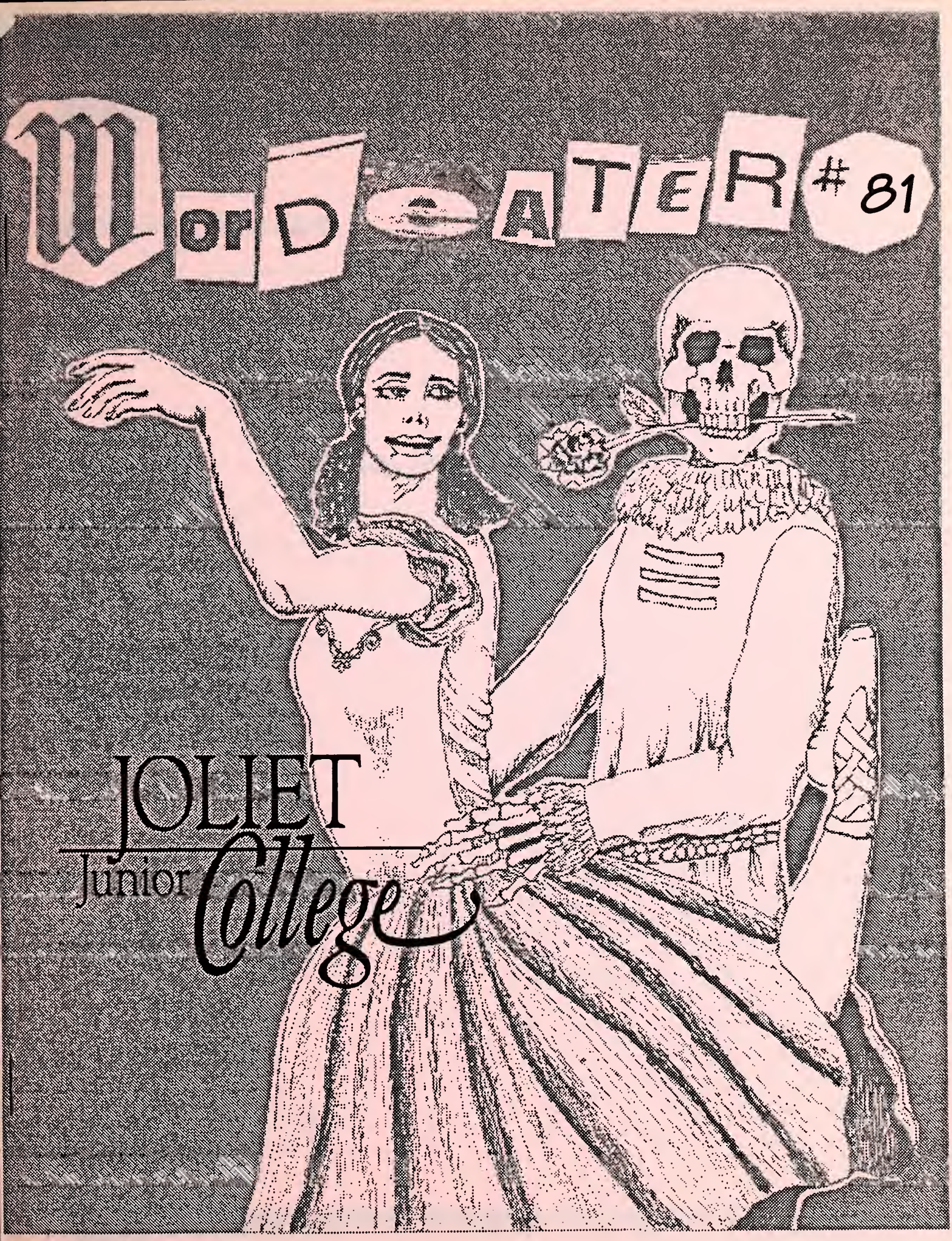
At six.
No, you can't have a knife.
No, you can't cross the street.
No, you can't have fireworks.
No, you can't have a go-cart.
NO, I DON'T HATE YOU.

At eighteen.
Yes, you should go to college.
Yes, you should get a job.
Yes, you should get a car.
Yes, you should get married.
YES, I DO LOVE YOU.

Sheryl Mastalesh

JOLIET
Junior College

Wordeater'81


WorDeATER #81
JOLIET
Junior College

Wordeater

JOLIET Junior College

Wordeater '81

December, 1992

The ***Wordeater,*** student literary magazine of Joliet Junior College, is published six times a year by Illinois Community College District 525, Joliet Junior College, Office of Student Services and Activities, 1216 Houbolt Avenue, Joliet, IL 60436-9352,1-815-729-9020 ext. 2308, FAX 1-815-744-5507. Mr. Donald M. Bell, Director.

The views expressed are those of the individual student authors and do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions or policies of the Board of Trustees of Illinois Community College District 525, Joliet Junior College.

All printed materials and copy rights are retained by the authors whose permission must be given prior to reprinting.

Awards

Poetry - $5.00 each

Christian Bernal

Lynn Klemkeksel

James Maxwell

Laurie Montgomery

Sheryl Mostalesch

Kevin Olchawa

Donica Rampa

Bree Sayers

Ryan Seeley

Jonathan Wolff

Cover Design - $20.00

Shellie Smith

Wordeater '81 Staff

Christian Bernal

Nancy Crow

Jennifer Jay

Sharon Lawson

Mary Frances Lund

Tony McFadden

Joy Tomaszewski

John Stobart, *Advisor and Editor*

All works accepted for publication in this edition of the ***Wordeater*** were approved by at least four members of the staff. John Stobart was solely responsible for deciding the award winners.

Submission Deadlines

Manuscripts and cover designs must be submitted to:

Mr. John Stobart
C-1069
Joliet Junior College

by February 15, 1993 for ***Wordeater '83*** and by April 15, 1993 for ***Wordeater '84.***

Contents

#1 - I Saw a Poem Today. 2
#2 - Images 2
#3 - AHHHH 2
#4 - Think of Puddles 2
#5 - Bonfire 2
#6 - To Appreciate a Fire 2
#7 - Sunset on the Lake 2
#8 - Black Bird 2
#9 - Eternally Free 3
#10 - Leaders 3
#11 - Tribute 3
#12 - A Place for Us 3
#13 - Why Did You Die? 3
#14 - I Dropped and Soared 4
#15 - Old Garden 4
#16 - She Turns Her Head 4
#17 - Underneath the Packaging 4
#18 - Down in Front 5
#19 - Jericho Dreams 5
#20 - Colonial Woods 5
#21 - Vanishing 5
#22 - Confection Corruption 5
#23 - Godlike 5
#24 - Rituals of the Ego Dancers 5
#25 - Freely Floating Through the Fronds 6
#26 - Prelude 6
#27 - Saw-Blades Chitter 6
#28 - He's Not the Keeping Kind 6
#29 - Survive 6
#30 - Wicked Smile 7
#31 - State of Mind 7
#32 - The Buzz 7
#33 - Flower 7
#34 - Hallmark 7
#35 - Second Chance 7
#36 - The System of Ones and Zeros 8
#37 - Writing Crimp 8
#38 - Peering Intently 8
#39 - Strive 8
#40 - I Did Get Off 8
#41 - Drenched 9
#42 - After the Wedding 9
#43 - Stepping Outside of Myself 9
#44 - Send to Me 9
#45 - Party On 10
#46 - Embrion 10
#47 - America, the Proud 11
#48 - Loreli 11
#49 - Induction to Cancer 11
#50 - Daddy's Way Led to Denial 12
#51 - Sunstretch Gone 12
#52 - Traveling Warrior 12
#53 - Feeder Mouse 12
#54 - The Philosophy of Numbers 12
#55 - Special 13
#56 - Seduction 13
#57 - She Sleeps 13
#58 - Practitioners of Lust 14
#59 - Sleak Sounds 14
#60 - Oh My Dear 14
#61 - For Man 14
#62 - Now 14
#63 - Two Rides for the Price of One 15
#64 - Paradox 16
#65 - The Plantation 16
#66 - Mental Breakdown #9 16
#67 - A Rake and Ladder 16
#68 - Good Love 16
#69 - Cough Syrup 17
#70 - Hitting Home 17
#71 - Identification, Please 17
#72 - Christopher Columbus 17
#73 - Einstein of Emotion 17
#74 - Down Time 18
#75 - Chicago Stairwell 18
#76 - Population One 18
#77 - There Would Be No Disease 19
#78 - All Alone 19
#79 - Mundane Murder 19
#80 - Just for You 19
#81 - Isolated 19
#82 - I Want Something 20
#83 - Bright Desert Sand 20
#84 - Need Help Quick 20
#85 - Back to School 20
#86 - Rebecca Thompson Brown (1992) 20
#87 - We'll Miss You Torrey 21
#88 - Letting Go 21

#1 - I Saw a Poem Today.

I saw a poem today.
It was written on the side of a tree
In snow-covered branches opening
to the sky.
It was nothing fancy
Just black and white
But a dappling more perfect than any
artist could draw
Or brush could paint
Perfect shading, perfect lighting
And all from where the snowflakes
fell.

I saw a song today.
It was sung by the babble of a brook
Running beneath the frosted trees.
It was nothing fancy
Just snow and ice
But a ripple more perfect than any
voice could sing
Or piano could play
Perfect melody, perfect harmony
And all from where the snowflakes
fell.

Lynn Klemkeksel

#2 - Images

We are on the opposite page
(a discarded moment, sleeves rolled and tattooed, a paper plate of cookies, glass broken and glued, reaching and staring upon someone else, a hand from the ceiling, an eye from the shelf)
desperately hanging off the margin.

Bree Sayers

#3 - AHHHH

Once upon a time these was nothing
in a reflection.
For a brief moment, beauty did not
exist.
Everything had an equally wonderful story to tell,
Opaque film need not flow over any
eyes.
The light can be warm with feeling.

Tony McFadden

#4 - Think of Puddles

Drop softly, sounds of rain
Believe what you hear when it
echoes in your mind
Small thoughts are big ideas in the
clouds
Brought down to the thinkers
Washing away confusion and dust
Leaving a smooth open plain
A wandering paradise
Wet with wonder, flowing to the out
ward
Bringing into the pool of thought,
another world.

Tony McFadden

#5 - Bonfire

Silent and dumb
lying before me
she is on the bed
her and her detachable parts

Smiling and perfect
sitting around me
they are on the floor
them and their painted eyes

Ignited and burning
blazing behind me
Barbie's in the fire
her and her plastic friends

Bree Sayers

#6 - To Appreciate a Fire

To appreciate a fire
You have to be chilled to the bone.
To appreciate desire
You have to have been all alone.
To understand your heart
You must listen to your head.
To tear your world apart
Go look for love, my friend.

Lynn Klemkeksel

#7 - Sunset on the Lake

Explosion of color
Enormous red ball
Wisps of clouds making bizarre
patterns
Slowly fading away . . .

Diane Drick

#8 - Black Bird

As I was walking out one day
I met a bird of pray, of prey?
It happened to me long ago
That baffling, boasting bird of clay

And as I walked he talked and talked
I dared not doubt his motives now
Forsooth, he was a man of cloth
And I, a trusting soul as yet

Convinced I was of Holy Debt
I owed to heaven a cross to bear
But not to beastly bird of prey,
of pray?
That doubling, troubling man of clay

And as I walked on one fine day
His smile it leered, he almost jeered
The devilish truth of him appeared
That blackish man of prey

So as you walk be now aware
The collar though it look so white
may be a mighty bit too tight
to hide the fatty neck of clay
of cold black birds of prey (of prey!)

Laura Maxwell

#9 - Eternally Free

Motorcycle red flying down the road,
no caution, no cares, passing right
by me,
through traffic, uphill, a dangerous
mode,
A man and a woman eternally free,
Monotonously I drive my car,
The night wind brushing their faces
and hair,
I feel desire to stop at a bar,
The sounds of lives run my emotions
bare,

An obscure stormy night is on the
prowl,
Fiery, destroyed steel I see ahead,
The victims mangled flesh, I hear
them howl,
Imagining the scene I know the couple
is dead,
Ambulance lights flashing and I
can't think,
I sit on my stool and consume
my drink.

Laura Montgomery

#10 - Leaders

Plastic people
with plastic lives.
Interchangeable morals
with interchangeable minds.

Foolishly watching the end of
the world.
Undaunted, untouched
they change the channel.

Bree Sayers

#11 - Tribute

To you who live in a pulsing heart of concrete
Who have never felt the poetry of a rippling stream
Never sensed the majesty of a soaring mountain
Never heard the symphony of autumn leaves

to you who go from box to box
Never sleeping under shelter of the sky
Never counting the stars by name
Never falling asleep to the music of pines

To you who nest in eyries of steel
Who never will hear the cry of the wolf
Never will feel the oceans' strength
Never will know all the parts that make a whole

How can you destroy what you have not seen?
How can you erase what you do not feel?
How can you make ruin when you do not know
What you are causing to be lost
Forever?

Lynn Klemkeksel

#12 - A Place for Us

journey with me
to the edge of darkness
where the sun doesn't shine
and nightmares are
a welcome relief
when we close our eyes
to the cruelties we witness
in our hopeless lives.
i come here often, alone.
but it's something i want
to share with you...
a place we can call
our
own.

Janine Passehl

#13 - Why Did You Die?

Why did you die,
and leave me alone?
Who will I call on the telephone?
I can't cope
with the way I feel.
The pain I have,
is oh so real.
I hurt so bad,
I just want to cry.
Why did you leave me?
Why did you die?

Heidi Terry

#14 - I Dropped and Soared

I flew, feet leaving the ground
Speeding wind crashing my chest
My wings spread wide, slick with rain
Drips of rain bulleting by like fiberglass lights

A light behind me pushes me down
As I try to lift it up
To pull me to Him
But this God is cruel

My head slices through air
Rhythmically pumping faster
Tightening muscles in my jaw

God watches me fall and he stays
I fall, beginning my crash
My head is spinning fast
My eyes streamed with tears

And God watches my fall

Ryan Seeley

#15 - Old Garden

Stately gladiolus spiking toward the light
Variegated greenly climber of roses
Teasing their neighbors with wafting scent
Velvety touch of petunias circling the path
Orange yellow marigolds determined to startle
purpling pansies caught playing in the dirt
thin raspy cutting edge of a dusky weed
surreptitiously intruding in a drama of color
Even the lichened stones have taken root
And no one dare presume to move them

Laura Maxwell

#16 - She Turns Her Head

She turns her head in the moonlight
Her eyes like sapphires in its gleam
She tosses her head
Sending waves of hair cascading down
in lush brown ripples that fall into place
Her dress rustles of silk
Its warm peach hue lighting up her skin
She moves with a dancer's grace
As the wind ruffles her hair
She waits with an expectant look
Her face one that has captured the heart
Of every prince at the palace
Her smile one that they all hope to see
Light up her face like the sun
But for now she stands in the garden alone
Turning her head as if hearing someone call
Feeling the whisper of her dress, the rustle of her hair
Then her glance is caught and held like a deer's
She freezes as she meets my eyes in the mirror
Then blinks
And vanishes like a dream.

Lynn Klemkeksel

#17 - Underneath the Packaging

You came just like a package in the mail
Wrapped up tightly with plain brown tape
I wanted to let you just sit on the counter
But curiosity led me to slit the tape,
Fold back the flaps,
And try to figure out what's inside
And underneath the cardboard
Was darkness, and at first not much more
Until I caught a glimpse of something white
And under the styrofoam pellets
I thought that I had figured you out
But I turned my interest away.
But curiosity took hold of me
In the form of scrunched-up newspaper
Protecting what lay deeper inside
So I peeled back another layer
And found more of the same
A swirl of dark and light
Bound together by music
But not the heart of the package
So I checked the address
And found it had somebody else's name on it
But curiosity will not let me return this parcel
And so I keep searching
Hoping to find what's really in there
Looking for the pearl of your heart
Underneath all the packaging.

Lynn Klemkeksel

#18 - Down in Front

A funny little man stands at the front of the room
Unable to see the minds around him.
He laughs at jokes only he can understand, as I ponder his notions,
then laugh even though I have no clue.
What I se can't be described in words, but in my mind expressions flow.
Although the funny little man stands alone,
he gives me a funny little feeling that puts a smile on my face.

Steve Maielli

#19 - Jericho Dreams

Sometimes Jericho dreams of being
a Savior unto all people.
And then She thinks of how she has
been scorned
by them all and decides
to destroy them instead.

Jericho dreams of being a Hero.
But then He looks back upon his life
and sees that nothing good
will ever becomeof Him.

Jericho dreamsof getting married
and becoming a Father
But then He thinks of how others
recoil from Him
andrealizes that He could never make
anyone happy.

Jericho dreams of going to college
and making Her family proud.
But then She sees how she must fail
no matter what She does
and decides to spare them
theshame.

Jericho dreams of finding someone
who understands and
accepts Her for what She is.
Then He thinks of how He didn't fit
even with His peers
and decides not to even try.

They dream of ending it all,
Cast out the outcast.

Joshua Dipert

#20 - Colonial Woods

Colonial woods
of birch and pine
full and fertile
with extended glory

primitive paths
pervade the promiscuous
forests flourishing
foliage
and cross smooth streams
of woodland tears

how lonely
how relaxed
we sweep in the
swinging breeze

Christian Bernal

#21 - Vanishing

Vanishing into the moonlight
Bouncing back and forth between
clouds
Playing ping-pong with my thoughts
Wishing never to end
Or to leave you behind

Laura Offrink

#22 - Confection Corruption

Your soul
Singer coated with innocence
Dipped in purity
And wrapped in security
which I unwrap and dissolve
and corrupt within my mouth
for we'll both enjoy every morsel.

Jeff Hicks

#23 - Godlike

The human glow
was there
in the masses
of gorgon trees

stable figures
standing in the wind
godlike

Christian Bernal

#24 - Rituals of the Ego Dancers

Circles of
False pretensions
Self inflated
ascensions
Bouncing and
blabbering—
Protecting
frail emotions
Little pig
mentality
Paranoid
lock-out

Jonathan Wolff

#25 - Freely Floating Through the Fronds

Freely floating through the fronds
Over the Pond
His tips light upon the water
Sending ripples,
Circles of motion
Eddies on your current life

To shape the rest of your life
Your hollow, soulless body and
brainless head
Reel and pitch and empty of thought

A single thought crosses your
confused thoughts
"Run."
And you do.

Years later,
Looking over your shoulder
You see that you were wrong

Ryan Seeley

#26 - Prelude

Violins ablaze.
Bow to electric queens.
With contemporary gleams.
Let the locks fly,
Aggression sweat,
And beauty die.
Raise your hands
(cold)
Amongst the bouncing radicals.
Bleed through greed
That salts our wounds.
Cry a survival plea
Of Anarchy.

David Tieman

#27 - Saw-Blades Chitter

Saw-blades chitter,
greedily
Shredding the pulpy
flesh
Of an angel
ripped free
from its
dark hovel.
An electric
shriek
In the distance.

This must be
the cornerstone
Of wilted souls
Raped in their
homeland
During its
prime.
Chaotic crowds
watch
and laugh
From the observation
platform.
White bulbs
of fascination

Let us gawk—
there is blood.
A peek at
another's demise.
A fascination
with death
Like eager
Christmas children.
Did you see his
intestines on
the interstate—
Crushed worms
in wine.

Jonathan Wolff

#28 - He's Not the Keeping Kind

I know what love is, little girl,
That's why I set him free—
Not because he loves you best
And wants no more of me.

You cannot capture wind
And hold it for you own
A free spirit will wander
Until it's found a home.

Don't hang on
He'll never stay
You'll only ground his flight
Then one day, you'll turn away
He'll be off into the night

A stubborn mule
Is a stupid fool
You're going to take the fall
Trust me child, I know him well
He's not the keeping kind.

Donica Rampa

#29 - Survive

Sometimes we argue,
Sometimes we don't.
But we have to remember what we
have is special.
When we argue,
It is not a question
of your pride
or mine.
It is a question of how strong our
love is,
and if we
have the will
to survive.

Tina Szegedi

#30 - Wicked Smile

Through the frail veil of
        Queen Ann's lace
she meticulously
weaved herself
her unstained eyes catch a slow
        sun's dance
passionate winds
comb her hair
shave her mind

she knows of the flowers
and of the earth
rain from her new hat
has unspeakable worth

and the meadows cannot hold
        her joy

hold her kiss as it
butterflys away

Christian Bernal

#31 - State of Mind

Wind echoing through my soul
somber night passing the time
Chaotic unity
Of my mind, floating on
The edge of reality
Abandoned by being to
the prism of the unknown
Behold the tranquility
Zone

Laurie Montgomery

#32 - The Buzz

Grey unstable room
Motioning about my head
Too much alcohol

Laurie Montgomery

#33 - Flower

My poor flower
Picked too soon
Please forgive me
As my needle drives through
My poor flower
Cold as death
Close your eyes
As I steal your breath

Christopher Savini

#34 - Hallmark

Living in this little fantasy of you
I thought of your leaving
the thought...
        It scared me
without you I'd die
I can't explain
the emptiness I'd have
because you'd take away
all your care
leaving only my used carcass.

After all of this
I got to know you
and it all seems
a little cliched—
melodramatic and hankneyed—
because I'm saying...
Good-bye.

Kevin Olchawa

#35 - Second Chance

The first time we hugged,
        I never let go,
Eternal Embrace.
The first time I saw you,
        my eyes never closed,
Beginning of a vision.
The first time you whispered my
        name was the last scream that
        filled my ears.
Mystical touches.
Beautiful sight.
Lingering tones of musical love,
The last time you loved me
Was the first time I died.

Tony McFadden

#36 - The System of Ones and Zeros

The powers that be,
Created the system of ones and zeros
That dictate our actions.
Why two simple numbers
Contain authority
Is beyond logical reasoning.

Who could have thought,
That the system of ones and zeros
Would control our every move?
We cannot even write
Without the authority
That dictates our new thought.

We can't go far,
Without the system of ones and zeros
Telling us when to stop and start.
Letting us know,
When our individuality
Has run out of gas.

Thanks to them,
The accursed system of ones
and zeros,
Has all power over our lives.
Enabling money men
To have full control
Over our independence.

Even as I write,
The damned system of ones
and zeros
Is evolving into six to the third power.
Fortunately for all,
It will be returned to the sand,
From where it came.

Jim Goebel

#37 - Writing Crimp

Thoughts keep mingling in my mind
morning, noon, mostly night
but I soon forget them if
I don't sit down to write.
Then I wonder whether
They're written well enough
for another's sight.
And if I could fact
Up to the disgrace
Of such a plight.
Rip, scribble, erase.

Sheryl Mostalesh

#38 - Peering Intently

A man freaks
and shrieks
As he watches
his severed arm
Writhe convulsively
in the dirt.
"It was an
accident,
I didn't mean
to do it.
I didn't think
she would get pregnant.
I didn't know
I would give rise
To this new
nation
Solemnly swathed
in your
patriotic blood."

Blind swine,
you have fucked up
for the final time.
You are doomed
to adore whores
and thieves.

Jonathan Wolff

#39 - Strive

Nothing lasts forever, and through
the times I have to climb
above the rest of you.
I have to rise.

Stephen Maielli

#40 - I Did Get Off

I did get off
on the horror
on the life
on the death
in all the disrespectful reality

They all
hid
behind hands
worming sights
through their
little fingers
like ashamed

sane

humans

I often think
as at the second
before birth/death

I'll orgasm

Christian Bernal

#41 - Drenched

Skin feels so wet. Gave up trying to regret.
Eyes are filling up again.
Visions are thicker in pairs of ten,
or maybe eleven. Our faces are cut to
even imperfection.
Do you remember how you came this
far?
At the stoplight you never think of
where you are. He keeps laughing all the time,
instead of hanging in the door try putting your
head back in your mind. The tape is always stuck
in rewind. See how regret never forgets.
Can't be too sure by reasoning with yourself.
Who is really? Nobody's pure. Ever notice how it
doesn't matter when you're at the stoplight?
Standing on the corner. This time it seems that
I'm bored most of the time. Walked down to the lake
shore today. Tripping over bodies I once knew. Some faces
familiar but only a few. At parties there's nothing to do
I'll just wait and get invited too. It's still a few, and
then some. Well I'll be a son of a gun.
Yes, I know I can't be right tonight. Father was an
acquaintance who probably was my dad, but don't cry over that
I never said I was sad. But if you are, then I'll surely be
glad. Cause I never cared until I got to the stoplight. Then
it all hit me at once. I could, but I couldn't forget who I
was. Just sitting at the stoplight.

Adam Wilcox

#42 - After the Wedding

Her childhood room is empty now
like the feeling in my heart.
She has her own abode to fill
with memories to part.
The time has seem to come so soon
now that she is away.
Like any break
it can never be the same.
Just as the child who was
once part of me
must venture on her own
I know this and yet
why did I feel so alone?

I guess I'll call her on the phone.

Sheryl Mostalesh

#43 - Stepping Outside of Myself

Stepping outside of myself
for a minute
I lose myself in the air around me
And I feel the cool brush beside me
I see the lingering fingers
that tell me what I have done
I only ask if it was worth it
To remember my life as it was
Or as it—
A painful, surly fight
And a conflict of rage
Stepping outside
I see what I am
And hope to be what I was

Ryan Seeley

#44 - Send to Me

Send to me
The cloak of darkness
This sunlight burns my eyes
The brightness was a masquerade
A costume for the lies

Laughter danced before me
A brazen teasing tart
And taunted me to chase her
As she tore my word apart

No I've no need for vision
Nor smiles and happiness
Rather leave me to the shadows
Within my cloak of darkness

Donica Rampa

#45 - Party On

Ritzy sat in the big chair at the party, drinking some Maui rum concoction the soused host had made for her. She watched the anonymous bodies stream in and out of the rooms and house. And she wondered what the hell she was doing here at 3:00 AM. She could be at home in bed, but no.

Bobby Brown pounded out of the speakers, and tough dancing was an idea that fluttered briefly through her mind, she was content to pet the beast of a black Chow that sat at her feet. The Beast uttered a low growl as Ritzy's friend stepped close.

"That Freakin' dog - I swear to God -"

"Maybe it's your perfume, Dee," she suggested.

"Oh, crock and bull, the damn thing is jealous. She thinks I'm going to take her beloved master away. Can you believe it?"

"Metallica sucks!" someone shouted in the background, but nobody paid attention. Ritzy quirked her eyebrows and turned back to Dee

"Maybe you should go out with Chris."

"Ah, I don't know. don't think I want a boyfriend whose dog is apt to maul me. Look at that thing. Get it away."

From the kitchen a chorus of male voices chanted, "Go!, Go!, Go!, Go!, Go!"

"Oh, there goes that testosterone thing again, "Dee remarked. Ritzy grinned and took another swig.

"Metallica Sucks!"

"Shut Up!!!" everyone replied in unison.

"Is the reason you won't go out with anyone because you still hope Cal is going to wake up?"

"Oh screw Cal, He's got his brains in his Gluteus Maximus half the time. No, Maybe, I don't know. Hey you want something to drink?"

"Nah, I better get going. Hey, is everything okay? I mean, you seem to avoid c-a-l as a conversation topic a lot lately." Dee took a long drink of beer and replied, "It still stings, is all, you sure you don't want another Maui?" "Yea, yea, I gotta get going."

"Metal...!" the voice was mysteriously muffled before it was able to finish its phrase.

Ritzy gave the Chow a parting pat and stood up, "Dee, I gotta cruise, see you Monday?"

"Yea, okay, take it easy, thanks for coming."

"You gonna be at Matt's bash next week?"

"Yep, probably," Rita stepped out the door and sighed. There goes another night in the fast lane.

#46 - Embrion

Clear streaming music rolls in
the meadow
bloody sands dominate the sunset
twist in the lively dusk
open the dome
to space

calls in imposter movements
flower the moon light leaches
give call to ghouls and the
juracic church
there is fury in the hills

knowledge is passed in
ghost whispers
the trees know all
see
all
everything

it's coming up...now
come back in a different window

the earth is seductive
vast and erudite
the planets are incestuous siblings
whose children have ran away

giant compound eyes capture the
entire rapture
murderous trust adorns sick smiles

Christian Bernal

#47 - America, the Proud

"I'll have a Big Mac...
extra special sauce...
Umm...large fry...
ahhh...nine piece McNugget...
...and...a hot fudge sundae-
no nuts! Okay!?
...hmmm...
and a large diet coke,"
said the obscenely obese woman.
An obnoxiously long haired-
Tye-dyed teen and his
half-shaved, half-purple haired
black Converse-wearing friend
turned toward her and laughed.
I sit and watch...
eating a small, green salad,
wondering
"What is wrong with America?"
when,
the answer is right in front of me.

Kevin Olchawa

#48 - Loreli

The light hue of your hair,
Accurately enhances the
radiant pools
That are your eyes.

Your diminutive stature enables
The ability to look upward
At the circumstances that surround.

Your smile alone is a treasure
That is made of greater riches
Than all of the gold in the
Black Hills,
And all of the diamonds
from Arkansas.

Your conversations are always
friendly and caring;
You speak great dreams
and concerns
With a taste of light corrosiveness,
But you can be flattered
yet flustered
If told certain emotions.

Lori, I write this for you,
Never forgetting of my feelings for
you,
And the distance that prohibits
them.

Jim Goebel

#49 - Induction to Cancer

The soft sensual cigar smoke
is a queer high
gently lofting its way upward
like a fallen angel with
dark radiance
and falling like a harsh purr on this
winter tile

with a cherishing touch
a kiss
it blows away
alien anatomy swirls
in the inncandecent hum
a bed of smoke
roses smile
in the utopian message

not a creature is stirring
and the cupboards are hair

nothing can save us
from a feline stare

Christian Bernal

#50 - Daddy's Way Led to Denial

Daddy's way led to denial
Mommy's led to loneliness
All others lead to confusion
I don't want to be "That Way"
So I have to go my way
I wish life had road signs
keep right, merge, dead end
So I could know for certain
Daddy says—follow him
he pays his bills—he is fine
—But he lives life with blinders—
Mommy says follow her
—But there are drawbacks to
no compromises—
And the others I know?
the others are
Tired, depressed, discontent
and cynical
They have death wishes and
drug problems
I don't want to be that way—
Guess I'm not a follower.

Donica Rampa

#51 - Sunstretch Gone

Sunstretch gone,
Loss of blind
innocence reveals past
Catcalls
faint and
echoing
Under fleeting
orange haze.
Child games stretch
into the evening
Shunted only by
bells
and parental
bellows.
Five more please
become thirty,
Premature
manipulation.
Arise early dawn
and repeat
the cycle
Frightening further
Paranoid Parents.

Jonathan Wolff

#52 - Traveling Warrior

From the dawn of time we came created by a God who showed no mercy, forced to travel silently down through the centuries living by a death sentence; not knowing what is worse, life or extinction. Living many secret lives; passing through mortal peoples souls; struggling to reach the time of the gathering. The ultimate prize for these persecuted immortals. For the few who remain, the lost souls of an unforging God, will battle to the last. No one has ever known they were among us. Until now.....

Charles O'Conor

#53 - Feeder Mouse

You lived in a motherhood,
The building was soft and warm,
A cushioned cedar floor,
a brother and sister.
What brought you to this destiny?
Certainly love didn't drive
you away.
I apologize to your outcome.
And thank you for what you're not
meant to be.
Accept this ode, and bid goodbye,
For stranger, hang your head
and die,
Not a fitting end for such
Go quickly after final touch.

Tony McFadden

#54 - The Philosophy of Numbers

One is king, two and beyond are free but entombed in the primacy of the first. All things revert to a singular cause. Two speaks of one in contempt for if not for the first's existence it solely would reign over Three and its children. Ten becomes the anniversary of one and one-hundred of ten, until the absurdity can only become rational with the election of one as giver of life to all. So, one sees all but lingering behind it, railed only by the incapacity of One for hindsight, is the nothingness of zero.

Frank Sanchez

#55 - Special

Deep
in my shrewd
crowded
confines
of glassy air
misty pandemonium
compels me to compose

For what
for that
something...

talented weavers
have spun
like mighty spiders
colossal monuments
which have all

fallen
something...

like the wind
devours
the earth
greatness
is consumed

by time
searching
endlessly
searching

for that
that
something

The flowing lion
can only
stare into the sun
so long
before he is
shot
and he can never
reach the sun before darkness

I shall reach
the sun
and behold it
in all it's timid brilliance
and I shall reach
farther

Christian Bernal

#56 - Seduction

He turns to me
And tilts his head
In silent contemplation
Then slowly stalks to make
his kill—
His newest love relation—
The lights have dimmed
The candles lit
The music soft love-rhythmic
I am watching waiting wanting
like a hopeless, drug-crazed addict.
"Its getting late and I should go."
His eyes lock me to a stare
Seductively, his tongue
Sears my throat
And I am trapped in his lair.
Closer now, and closer still
Pressed hard against my mouth
His hands are moving east and west
While mine are heading south
On the floor in candlelight
His hair a golden mane
Once again I attempt to escape
Before I go insane
His husky voice says I'm free to go
As his body moves above me
His eyes smirk, saying "I don't
think so"
I'm in his cage and he shall
have me.

Donica Rampa

#57 - She Sleeps

She sleeps
in pink
sweet satin
slumber
sprawled like a
cute kitten
on the great mattre ›

The halls are
hollow railroads
breathing hues
of clicks and footsteps
weariness

I watch her sleep
still

foot hanging off
like a worn child
carried up the stairs
and to the bedroom
sleeping

and she wakes
smiles
and I come

Christian Bernal

#58 - Practitioners of Lust

Money
controls
the arousal
of materialism

need
want
buy-buy-buy

materialism
contains
the lust
for power

compete
climb
control

Power assures
the organism
of greed

Kevin Olchawa

#59 - Sleak Sounds

Sleak sounds
in shaded areas
nests nestled
in the tranquil trees

Bestial barks
whispered wonderment
like giant ribbons
weave
flutter
and mince

quickly
like passing spirits
in and out
timid and persistent

The green hills
are lagoons
of kind flowery flesh
on steamy evenings

Christian Bernal

#60 - Oh My Dear

Oh my dear, while you sleep,
I lay my dead down and I weep,
Thinking of the times we've had
Thinking of the good and bad.
And then I remember a place
so far,
This place is where your
troubles are,
And I wish you would, just for
one day,
Just come to me and get away.
But you see, my dear, while
you sleep,
I lay my dead down and I weep,
Because I think of my love for you,
And I wonder if you love me too.

Tina Szegedi

#61 - For Man

We spray our hair
Layer lashes
Line lids
Cover our lips
Trim our hips
Enhance our breasts
Try to look our best
We bare our bodies
But
Does he ever see
the real
me?

Sheryl Mostalesh

#62 - Now

What now
again
a constant question
he wakes to

why now
again
a persistent pondering
which haunts him

how...
now
for the first time
the quiescent quandary
with an ever
elusive answer

Not now
again
his indolent delay
live for today
it's the way
he say
thinking of tomorrow
can only bring
sorrow

Christian Bernal

#63 - Two Rides for the Price of One

The downpour of rain gradually was putting the all night driver into a state of hypnosis as she followed the yellow lines down the highway. In the distance, she noticed someone furiously waiving their hands over their head. as she was slowing down, she was thinking, "Am I going to stop to help? Am I going to give them a lift somewhere? Or am I going to continue driving down this ghost town-like highway?" She wasn't sure what she was going to do. All of a sudden, she found herself pulled over and saying, "Do you need a ride somewhere?" "Thank you, you're a lifesaver" he replied. She unlocked the door and let him in. It wasn't until around five miles down the road that she thought she ought to say something, since he had said nothing. "My name is Stacei, What's yours?" "Scott" he answered. She continued, "Don't feel uncomfortable, I know just how you feel, I used to ride with strangers, too, when I was going to college. You can relax." "Thank you", he said. "So, what do you do, Stacei?" "I'm an artist." "Do you work for someone, or what? he asked. "No," she replied, "I freelance. I have a display opening up on Monday."

As the rain started to dwindle down, Stacei started to fall asleep at the wheel. Scott cried out, "Look out for the rail!" "Oh my God! Oh shit! I can't believe I did that! she screamed. "Do you want me to drive?" he offered. "No", she replied, "there's a motel a mile or two up this road. Once we get there we are only about sis hours away from the city. Oh, by the way, where are you going, anyway?" "To the city" he said in a sullen voice. The change in his voice made Stacei begin to think, "How convenient. I don't have to go out of my way and I won't feel guilty leaving him in the middle of nowhere."

After pulling into the motel parking lot, Stacei got out of the car and was walking towards the motel office when she turned and asked "Aren't you coming in?" No" he answered. She pressed, "Well why not?" "All I have for money right now is an uncashed check. I'll just sleep in the car" he said in a frail innocent voice. "Well, OK" she replied hesitantly.

About an hour or so passed and Stacei couldn't fall asleep. "Fine thing" she thought, "earlier I almost crashed the car because I couldn't stay awake!" She kept thinking about Scott sleeping in the car. It was driving her nuts, so she got out of bed and went tot he door. Much to her surprise, Scott was standing there when she opened it. He looked as if he had been standing there for a while. "Do you have an extra blanket and a pillow" he asked, "It's getting a little cold out there." For a second, Stacei thinks that she shouldn't let him in. "This guy is a stranger, I don't know who he is, what he does, or where he comes from." But she asks him in anyway saying, "you can sleep in here on the floor" she tells him as she hands him a blanket and a pillow. As he places the pillow and lies down with the blanket, Stacei returns to her bed feeling more relieved and at ease with her conscience. Suddenly, she has a feeling that Scott is staring at her and it makes her nervous. Trying not to let her nervousness show, she asks, "Is there anything else you need?" "Yes," he says "Could you hand me some matches? I'd like to have a cigarette before I go to sleep." "Sure, there should be some right here on the nightstand," she answers. Grasping the matchbook, she realized she would have to get out of bed to give Scott the matches. Swinging her legs over the edge of the bed, she stood. He never said a word, just lay there looking up at her. She looked down at him laying there and suddenly thought that she wanted to have sex with him...passionate, no holds barred sex! Her good judgment was telling her no, but her libido was having nothing to do with that answer. Her hormones were running wild and something deep inside of her was urging her to make the first move...NOW! She said nothing as she handed him the matches, but stared erotically into his eyes. As Scott takes the matches, Stacei furtively reaches for the buttons of his pants. Taking her cue, he slips off her shirt as their lips meet in a passionate wet kiss. It is obvious that neither of them is interested in much foreplay and Stacei is pleasantly surprised when she discovers that Scott is very well endowed. Pushing his shoulders back, she says, "Relax and enjoy the ride."

As a shard of sunlight stabbed through a rip in the cheap motel curtains, Scott's eyes fluttered open. Stretching his arm across the pillow, he realized she wasn't there on the floor where they had both fallen asleep after their frenzied orgy. He called here name, thinking she might be in the bathroom, but there was no answer. Raising, he crossed to the window and pulled the curtain back. The car was gone. Well, that's one on me. Usually, it's the other way around. Walking over to the shower, he thought, "Oh well, it could be worse, she could have used up all of the hot water."

Amy Guertin

#64 - Paradox

Questions?
Comments?
Execution.
Meager
        final reflections.
Spectators
        gleefully observing
Rapt,
        staccato shots.
Bloodshed
Final
        remittal bow
Body-slump
Escape
Freedom

Jonathan Wolff

We sat on the roof
at a place
called

the plantation

looking down
the people looked up
we gave them

a salutation

lying back
looking skyward
I felt like a star
lost in

a constellation

Kevin Olchawa

#66 - Mental Breakdown #9

The psychological atrocities
that are dancing through
my mind—all mental
functions put on hold,
(how I love the style!)
Black and white both
fade to grey
Bordering on the edge
of mental breakdown #9
coming down the line

Sue Cherven

#67 - A Rake and Ladder

To my childhood
I leave:
One mountain of crunchy leaves,
One frisbee ont he rooftop,
One parent that blew away,
And another that I couldn't reach

David Tieman

#68 - Good Love

There is hanging from a hook
        on the east end of my room,
        a man, but not any man,

This in one good lookingindividual
        who has taught us more about love
        than anyone who has lived.

And what can be more good-looking
        than the crimson breach
        in each of his outstretched hands.

Jim Goebel

#69 - Cough Syrup

Walking slowly across what used to be tall grass
prairies, it's hard to picture barren miles of rock
and sand as expanses of green.
The few weeds and shrubs are scattered, adding
a loneliness of lost souls to the wanderers
absent companions.
When was land beautiful?
What happened to the Nature to be one with?
Dead land, floating through the heavens, carrying
this thoughtful passenger in a circle into time
that will only run out and forget its past and
Re-live the new life brought to an old friend.
Oh, to experience the birth of what now only
fossils are made of. To watch cleansing waters
flow again, and create a breeze that would
Bring breathe for the choking earth.

Tony McFadden

#70 - Hitting Home

"I will work for food"
the sign read

If it were the city
I would have thought
how sad, that's too bad

The difference here
was that this man
was on my street
in my town

I wanted to stop
ask him what happened
why he was so low

I only looked out my window
then in my rear view mirror
as I passed him by

Kevin Olchawa

#71 - Identification, Please

Upon entrance into my lair
please present a photo I.D.
And let me know who really lives
in you

My father can leave,
my brother can turn away
And my sister must close her eyes
if she stays

My mother knows
but please keep your distance
The sun shouldn't burn you,
my dear

Please don't call yourself a friend
a husband
a lawyer
a lover
nor a priest
Because I'll have to let you leave

Ryan Seeley

#72 - Christopher Columbus

An inmate of this culture
I watch with burning eyes
A heroic legend from the past
Fall to his demise
Finally.

Bree Sayers

#73 - Einstein of Emotion

I did some crying
I did some praying
And I did a lot of thinking
The thinking led to revelations
Which led to theories
All relative to the reasons of
"Why the boy ran away"
Until I realized that
All theories could be right
—or wrong—
And it all ends up in the
Same place anyway
Him being with her
And
Me being alone
What a waste of wind

Donica Rampa

#74 - Down Time

We Sliced through the water,
the harsh head wind hurt
my hands—
I bent over and fought
the waves and rain
that spit in my eyes
The weather started to break—
I squinted to find
our little cove
finally
we hit a calm
the sun squeaked out
A bird broke into song—
A deer looked up from the brush—
A beaver swam to its dam
We slowed into the bay—
From the weeds jumped a bass—
I threw in my line,
and sat for a time

Kevin Olchawa

#75 - Chicago Stairwell

Chicago stairwell
ethnic tiles mosaic the floor
late night tunnels to safety
home

souls searching for the
wicked angel
between the refineries
and restaurants
beach side breeze
lost and lingering
in cowardly huddles
in crooked alleys
souring

italian latino blacks
conjugate
in the city glows
all night
long

Christian Bernal

#76 - Population One

The sunrise edged above the horizon,
above the long straight two lane highway
separated by the blurring dash-dash-dash
of yellow line.
A green sign rushed closer
against the growing day—
golden corn engulfed the road
as the sign came into full view.
It simply read,
"Your life 13 miles"
The cornfield streaked into rolling hills
and scattered shacks—
as the shacks tore by they changed
into a small town with a local tavern
and corner drugstore.
Cruising down main street
the town evolved into suburbia
with rows and rows of precisely decorated homes
screaming with complacency and conservatism.
The day clouded and drizzled
as the highway extended to four lanes—
suburbia became less affluent and the homes
became large brick buildings with the
scars of smoldering fires around
the bare broken windows.
Lightning enveloped the sky—
hail played a fevered beat on the windshield
Fighting, the noon sun dried up the clouds
and the clean rays flashed off the windows
and the sleek steel skyscrapers that loomed above—
Passing through the city I tried to slow,
but the force of the traffic thrust me along
until the Metropolis led to a narrower road—
with the plush green golf courses of another
yet more beautiful suburb
which seemed to...linger...a bit longer
on the highway. Unfortunately, the sun started to set.
As dusk wore on—
the landscape flattened into swaying fields
of long dry grass.
Seemingly, out of nowhere—
the bright lights of a large semi
lit up the road from behind
glaring into my rear-view mirror—
blinding my sight—
until—
I could no longer see.

Kevin Olchawa

#77 - There Would Be No Disease

There would be no disease if
society weren't addicted
to sickness.

Christian Bernal

#78 - All Alone

In the benevolent silence of night, the anguish that lies seemingly dormant during the light hours, my troubled mind is awakened. It is awakened by the pain that comes from the beating of a broken heart.

Broken not from sickness or age, but by he unbridled rage of love that has been shattered; by ignorance and the unjust turmoil that is life.

Love, as life gives no justification for its heinous acts of humanity, only that for which it takes.

It makes me lust for vengeance; vengeancefor that which it has taken from my heart, my mind, my soul. I just want to be free.

Sheryl Mostalesh

#79 - Mundane Murder

Mundane Murder
average
artistry
of kindly
slaughters
corpulent, ghostly
breasts
arresting the seance
mesmerism
of wise
unfed ushers

Fluent chimeras
tease and
mete torture
upon gyved mannequins
nightly
in this
hot
dissolving domicile

Lengths without measure
the mirage
militia
of life
rapidly ravaging
the high churches

Christian Bernal

#80 - Just for You

I gave her a single rose.
Delicate to the touch.
Vibrant red with long green stem.
Just to show how much I love her.

Steve Maielli

#81 - Isolated

Isolated
motionless
orchid
sleeping
in the
empty
field

wakes to meet the
bee

as he drinks
of her
provocative
pollen

she sings for
the butter
and
the dragon

alluring them with primal scents

she plays all day before the
peeping tom
sun
teasing and taunting
oh, everyone

winking at walkers
and passerbys

she flirts and flirts
until the
moon
is high

pretty little
prostitute
striped by the air

free
glowing
angel
with fire for hair

Christian Bernal

#82 - I Want Something

I want something
I can keep
perched high on the shelf
To be taken down
in the still late night
under the bed
to be read.
Printed on
the finest flesh—
Painted letters of reason
describing a call to treason.

I want something
I can see
tangibly timed
obsidian soul
Tossed head dismissal
ridicule
laughter
erection fingertips
Societal paradox
Assassinations of
sinful hope

Did you know they've
found the beginning
of the Universe
at its end?
(or maybe it's
the beginning)
They've found God
through golden lenses
Gravitational Jesus
Hydrogen High-Priest
stoned on helium
and stardust.

Jonathan Wolff

#83 - Bright Desert Sand

Bright desert sand mingles calmly
in galactic swirls
perfect lively butterflies.

Christian Bernal

#84 - Need Help Quick

Smith Corona
Replacement Parts

Dear Sir,

We have recently moved and during the move the cord and plug from my practically new Smith Corona De Ville typewriter were lost. Would you please send me a cord and plug and also please advise me on how to repair a damaged relationship that's had innumerable jolts and is somewhat frayed at the edges? We would very much like to save both, if possible.

Thanking you in Advance,
Sincerely,
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Laura Maxwell

#85 - Back to School

Dead man stalking
eyes of Jupiter stream
graveyard solicitor
he takes locus position in the
vast classroom

garbed in the uniform of birth
knowledge is absorbed in
an estranged
nocturnal osmosis
the pupil sways in thick excess

Christian Bernal

#86 - Rebecca Thompson Brown (1992)

She jumped from the cliff
She'd never been free
The memory that haunted
Would not let her be

The men that had tortured
Her sister Amy
Were asking for pardon
And bargaining a plea

The call came too late
the answer was no
With death was her date
She just had to go

Sheryl Mostalesh

#87 - We'll Miss You Torrey

As I drove by the banner facing Houbolt, tears blurred my vision. How sad to die so young. Torrey had just started the new semester at JUCO. My daughter's boyfriend's name was included in the list of friend's signature scribbled on the waving memorial.

I didn't even know Torrey, but I sympathized with his mother, as a mother. I thought of her thrill and fear of discovering that she was pregnant with that child, the long nine month's waiting period, and the unbearable pain of childbirth. The many nights of sleeplessness, hours of feeding, changing, and consoling. The fear for his falling when he took those first tumbles and then on. The sadness of losing her baby to kindergarten and then the sentimentality and joy mixed in watching him turn into a young man. The hopes for his future. The lectures and warnings about being careful. The arguments about getting a motorcycle. The many, "oh mom's", she must have heard. The fear fulfilled. The love for fast in the boy quickly took him away.

So, my six-year old son, please try to understand when I ask you to slow down on your bike now, and later, in your car. Don't roll your eyes when I warn and caution about dangers. somehow, I know I'll listen to the "oh mom's" too. You already have that fascination with speed. The fear hangs on.

Childbirth labor was very painful, but in time its memory is dulled. The pain of losing a child could not be compared, and I'd never forget, and I don't want to know it. We all send our children off to the war of life and hope that they keep marching home again. We cross our fingers and hold our hearts as if that will protect us.

When I pass that particular place on Houbolt I'll think of Torrey. And to Torrey's mother, I send my sympathy.

Sheryl Mastalesh

#88 - Letting Go

At six.
No, you can't have a knife.
No, you can't cross the street.
No, you can't have fireworks.
No, you can't have a go-cart.
NO, I DON'T HATE YOU.

At eighteen.
Yes, you should go to college.
Yes, you should get a job.
Yes, you should get a car.
Yes, you should get married.
YES, I DO LOVE YOU.

Sheryl Mastalesh

JOLIET
Junior College

Wordeater'81